

Rev. Rogers reading
from the Author
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S E R M O N:

PREACHED AT

THE ASSIZES HELD AT GUILDFORD,

JULY THE 30th, 1798,

BEFORE THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE KENYON,

AND THE HONOURABLE

SIR FRANCIS BULLER, BART.

By JONATHAN BOUCHER, M.A. F.A.S.

VICAR OF EPSOM, IN SURREY.

PUBLISHED AT THE UNANIMOUS REQUEST OF THE GENTLEMEN
OF THE GRAND JURY.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY J. FLYNNELL;

FOR W. CLARKE, NEW BOND STREET.

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IN SCIENCE



PRINTED AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

FOR W. CLARKE, NEW BOND STREET.

1798.

JAMES TROTTER, ESQ.

HIGH SHERIFF OF THE COUNTY OF SURREY,

AND TO

THE GENTLEMEN OF THE GRAND JURY:

THE RT. HON. GEO. LORD LESLIE.

JOHN CREUZE, ESQ.

THE RT. HON. LORD WM. RUSSELL.

GEO. GRIFFIN STONESTREET, ESQ.

SIR JOSEPH MAWBEY, BART.

ROBERT HUDSON, ESQ.

JOHN WHITMORE, ESQ. M. P.

JAMES TRECOTHICK, ESQ.

GEORGE SHUM, ESQ. M. P.

LANNOY RICHARD COUSSMAKER,

WILLIAM CURRIE, ESQ. M. P.

ESQ.

GEORGE HOLME SUMNER, ESQ.

WILLIAM GILL, ESQ.

ROBERT HANKEY, ESQ.

HENRY STREATER GILL, ESQ.

JOHN WEBBE WESTON, ESQ.

CHARLES BERKHEAD, ESQ.

THOMAS PAGE, ESQ.

JOHN HUGHES, ESQ.

WILLIAM ALDERSEY, ESQ.

WILLIAM TIMSON, ESQ.

RICHARD CARPENTER SMITH, ESQ.

RALPH LEYCESTER, ESQ.

MY LORDS, AND GENTLEMEN,

THE deference which is due to the unanimous judgement of so many Gentlemen of the first respectability, induces me to obey with readiness a request which it is an honour to receive. Under the shelter, therefore, of such authority, and the sanction
of

of a most flattering commendation from the Bench, by one of its highest and brightest Ornaments, this Discourse is humbly submitted to a Tribunal, before which it was never intended to appear.---But whatever reception it may experience from the Public, such powerful and respectable Testimonies in its favour will ever be remembered with pride and gratitude by,

MY LORDS, AND GENTLEMEN,

Your much obliged and

Most obedient Servant,

JONATHAN BOUCHER.

Epsom, August 1, 1798.

S E R M O N.

PSALM LXXXV. VERSE 10.

"MERCY AND TRUTH HAVE MET TOGETHER; RIGHTEOUSNESS AND PEACE
HAVE KISSED EACH OTHER."

WHETHER this Psalm was written on the defeat of Absalom's rebellion, the unexpected retreat of Sennacherib, or the return of the Jews from the Babylonish captivity, it has not been found possible to ascertain: but that it was composed on some public occasion, is sufficiently evident from the context. Like most of the prophetic writings, it comprehends some objects that are obvious and immediate, and others that are recondite and re-

mote. In the former point of view, it exhibits an outline, or sketch, of the polity of the kingdom of Israel, whilst it remained in its state of perfection; a polity which every other country might be proud to emulate: whilst, in its secondary sense, it is in perfect accord with the general scope of the scriptures of the Old Testament; for it foretels the advent of the Messiah with such clearness and certainty, that even the Jews have always regarded, and still do regard, it as prophetic of that great event.

The first three verses of this Psalm are descriptive of the national gratitude of the Jews. Not yet generally corrupted, they here acknowledge, with equal prudence and piety, how favourable the Almighty had been to *their land, in forgiving their iniquity*; and thus averting those calamities which, sooner or later, are sure to fall on every sinful people. Then follow their fervent supplications to the Throne of Grace, to convert and reform the hearts of those who, being estranged from Israel, and the God of Israel, still fondly hankered after the bewitching idolatries of the nations around them. As heretofore He had, in many trying exigencies, protected them from others, they now entreat Him to preserve them from themselves; that they, whom no foreign foe had hitherto been able to subdue, might not at length be brought to destruction by their own degeneracy.

The last five verses of the Psalm contain an animating assurance that, upon so proper a conduct on their part, notwithstanding their
alarming

alarming distractions from within, and the no less awful dangers which surrounded them from without, God would indeed *show forth his loving kindness, and speak peace unto his people, even unto such as are His saints, and fear Him.* Under this implied condition of their becoming a regenerated and virtuous nation, it was not too much to promise them, that the Almighty would again be *nigh unto them*; and that, of course, they should be blessed with every fruit of public prosperity---that *the land should not only yield its increase, but that there should be a good and a grateful people to enjoy its bounty. Mercy and Truth should meet together; Righteousness and Peace shall kiss each other.*

Were we to consider the text in its spiritual sense, and merely as a typical representation of the felicity of those times, in which the Gospel shall generally prevail, there can be no doubt but that doctrines of still higher importance might, very properly, be deduced from it. Regarded however, in its temporal application, it still suggests many reflections of great moment to the peace and happiness of mankind; and such as, I conceive, may very commendably engage our attention on occasions like the present. After observing then, that, in scripture language in general, as well as that of the text in particular, *Mercy* may, and does very often, import what is now more commonly called Benevolence, and that the word *Truth* is also frequently synonymous with Justice---I shall proceed briefly to point out to you, from instances of almost daily occurrence among ourselves, how natural it is for a people who have arrived at

any considerable degree of refinement, to confound these virtues, and thereby destroy their essence.

Philosophers of a certain description are proud to compliment the age in which we live, as more refined, more enlightened, and more liberal, than any that has preceded it. This panegyrick is, in *their* sense of the words, very possibly true: but, admitting it to be so in its fullest extent, it still deserves to be considered, how far this boasted improvement redounds to our credit. In all discussions, it is of moment to be exact, if not in the definition, at least in the application, of our terms. Now, when we boast of the great refinement of modern times, I apprehend, our boast is well founded only as it respects superficial qualities: it is not that we are more alive to sentiments of high honour; more easily, or more deeply, touched at the sight of human woe; more chaste, more charitable, or more pious: but that our manners are more courteous; our modes of address are more conciliating; and the general habits of our lives more highly polished. Far from vindicating, or even excusing, either coarse manners, or a vulgar and inelegant style of behaviour, I readily acknowledge, not only that we are much improved in these respects, but that such improvement is of real and great advantage to social life. But, if this superiority over our "rude forefathers" has been obtained at the expence of our sincerity, the purchase has been a dear one. Properly understood, refinement is of value only as it indicates inward purity, and an abhorrence of every thing that is low, mean, and base: whatever, therefore,

therefore, may be its pretensions, it is spurious and false, whilst it shews itself only by being indulgent to folly, and tolerant and forgiving chiefly towards vice.*

There is nothing in the history either of the higher or lower orders of society, during the present century, even in those states of Europe where the sciences flourish most, which proves that the human mind is more penetrating, sound, or just, than it was in former times : or (if by the boast of being more *enlightened*, we are to understand the advancement of sound learning,) that we are even more learned than our forefathers were : yet, as it does not fall within the scope of our present purpose to institute a comparison between the intellectual attainments of different ages, I shall resume the consideration of those other topics more immediately suggested by the

* Among the numerous instances which illustrate this observation, I hope I may, without giving offence, be permitted to mention one which I cannot help regarding as characteristical of the times in which we live—namely, that, whilst we stigmatize our ancestors as superstitious zealots, or gloomy bigots of dark and unenlightened ages, for having founded chantries, or endowed monasteries, one of the strongest supports of our claim to being more enlightened and more liberal, rests on our having instituted, not indeed directly asylums for idleness, but retreats, where those who have been rendered wretched by vice, may find some of the evils consequent on a vicious life mitigated and relieved. Nor can it, in reference to the same subject, escape observation, that a well known philanthropist of our times has been more extolled than almost any other man of his age, not because he was a wise and a good man, or at all *distinguished* for the performance of the duties of social life, but merely for having wandered round the world to meliorate the condition of those whom, in the communities to which they respectively belonged, it had been found unsafe to trust at large and unconfined.

text ;

text; viz. the injury done to pure morals, legal justice, genuine loyalty, and true religion, by that ape of *mercy*, modern philanthropy; which, under the pretence of befriending the whole human race, disturbs the peace and destroys the happiness of all its own nearest and dearest connections.*

In no way do those wicked men, whose wretched occupation it is to mislead mankind, so often succeed, as by confusing essential distinctions, and thus bestowing fair names on foul deeds. And as there is nothing so bad as the corruption of that which is originally good, it is much to be lamented, that this abuse of words, the fatal harbinger of still greater abuses, prevails most in allusion to acknowledged virtues. Thus, aware of the great respect everywhere deservedly paid to real honour, the duellist, who, most ge-

* It has been judiciously observed, by an eminently useful and valuable writer, in a periodical publication which may be quoted, with peculiar propriety in this place, because its professed object is the defence of religion against the daring attacks of modern infidels and innovators, and the consequent promotion of that reformation of morals and manners which must necessarily result from a general acknowledgement of, and firm adherence to, the sublime truths and divine precepts contained in the holy writings;—that, among the predisposing causes of those calamities which now distract the world, “may undoubtedly be numbered that false estimate which, in modern times, mankind have been accustomed to form of themselves; and which has led them to undervalue, and even to despise, the wisdom, the discoveries, and the institutions of former ages, and to think themselves, in every respect, superior to their forefathers; to whose profound researches and patient labour they are indebted even for those advantages, the consciousness of which inspires them with vanity.”

The Anti-Jacobin Review, No. I. for July, 1798, p. 112.

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nerally, is a man of strong passions, weak judgement, and no religion, is suffered to palm himself on the world as a man of honour, and is received in it, if not with increased esteem, yet without any loss of character: and the prodigal, who dissipates the inheritance of his fathers, and brings ruin on all who have been so unhappy as to repose any confidence in him, is still praised by the world for his good nature, his generosity, and even liberal disposition. The spirit which engenders this species of abuse, is also exerted to soften terms of reproach, and so to *qualify* the language of censure, as to give it the semblance of implied approbation. Thus, the atrocious wretch, who has robbed some defenceless and unsuspecting female of that virtue, for which the world affords no possible compensation, calling himself, by the grossest of all misnomers, a man of gallantry, is, by the lax courtesy of the times, received in society as a man of unblemished honour.*

* It is remarkable, that this false tenderness meets with resistance only in a quarter where it was least to be expected; the softer sex, whose characteristics are *diffidence and timidity*, display consistency and firmness in cases where men are irresolute, and afraid to act up to the dictates of their judgement and conscience. When a woman falls, she falls to rise no more. In the female world, no kind oblivious mantle is to be found to throw over and shelter a tainted reputation. All that is left for such hapless victims, is, to retire from those busy scenes of life, which they are deemed no longer worthy to fill; and in silent sorrow, by penitence and prayer, endeavour to secure to themselves that peace in another world, which they have for ever lost in this. That this extreme strictness may, in some instances, be rigid and severe, no one will deny; but it is probably owing, in no small degree, to this jealous anxiety for the honour of unsullied virtue, that the women of these realms are so pre-eminent in respectability, as the world in general has long acknowledged them to be.

The

The evils introduced into the walks of private life, by thus putting bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter, darkness for light and light for darkness, are sufficiently numerous: but they are incalculable, when, unsatiated, as it were, with individual destruction, they go on, and, like some destroying angel, aim at universal ruin, by attacking that law, of which (to use a bold, but beautiful, personification of the judicious Hooker,) "Nothing less can be acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God; her voice, the harmony of the universe;" to whom "all things in heaven and in earth do homage; the very least, as feeling her care, and the greatest, as not exempt from her power. Both angels, and men, and creatures, of what condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her, as the mother of their peace and joy."

It is, therefore, the important duty of every man who comes into our Courts of Justice, in whatever character, to reverence and support the Laws. If he appear as a witness, and be of an ingenuous mind, he cannot but be impressed with a strong sense of the importance of the duty imposed on him. What that duty is, seems to be sufficiently explained in the oath administered to him; and which, with all due deference, I beg leave to add, can never be too solemnly administered. However, as a man, he may feel all the kindest affections of his nature interested in the consequences that may seem likely to result from his testimony, such considerations must, on no account, be suffered to influence his evidence. His sole concern

concern must be to divest his mind, as far as he is able, of every bias, and to be of no side; but, at all adventures, clearly and manfully to speak the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth.

It is, if possible, still more incumbent on Jurors to be upon their guard against being influenced, not only by any sinister motives of

fear or favour, but by the more insinuating pleas of compassion and mercy. It is a grievous mistake for any man acting in this capacity

to imagine, that if he err on the side of mercy, his error is excusable; because, in presuming to exercise mercy, he usurps a function which does not belong to him. To administer justice, not to ex-

ercise lenity, is the province of a Jury. And if, when on fair grounds, a Jury is satisfied of the guilt of the culprit before them,

they yet will, from any motives, be induced to pronounce a verdict of acquittal, far from being merciful, they are chargeable with the most complicated and extensive inhumanity: for, in

sparing the guilty, they punish the innocent. For mercy is a principle which, however right and amiable in itself, becomes wrong and unamiable when it is wrong applied. That tenderness which

was implanted in our natures for the best purposes, answers and promotes the worst, when it is exercised in a manner inconsistent with the rules of truth, equity, and public utility: when exerted in

favour of the undeserving, it becomes a real injury to the deserving. Nay, in some cases, to save a life which is forfeited to the laws, is to endanger the lives of millions; and to bring into jeopardy

the safety of their Sovereign, the security of the State, and the very existence of the Constitution.---But there is yet a still more serious consideration, to deter men from so gross a dereliction of their duty, that he who against conviction can be brought to acquiesce in such a verdict, though screened from the censures of an earthly Judge, incurs, in the eye of that heavenly Judge, who reads the hearts and minds of all his creatures, the guilt, and all the dreadful consequences, of perjury---he violates his oath, and "the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his Name in vain."

Extreme cases, no doubt, may be supposed, in which a strict adherence to the law might be productive of hardships that, in the opinions of some, would go nigh to amount to injustice. But if such cases occur, it certainly does not belong to the persons to whom they are submitted, in a course of *investigation*, to seek to redress them, by counteracting the law. It was reserved, however, for this refined age, to draw a line between legal and moral offences, and to infer, that a man may be guilty of a breach of the law, without committing any violation of morality. In other times, he who should only have eluded the laws, and much more, he who should have had the hardiness to set them at defiance, would have been detested and shunned, as the pest of society. If even a legal acquittal, whilst it exempted him from legal punishment, did not also exempt him from all suspicion of moral turpitude, it was not in its power to rescue him from that merited abhorrence, which, in all
well-

well-regulated states, is attached to the commission of crimes. But, who knows not that, in this enlightened and liberal age, to be arraigned for Treason, is, with some men, a presumptive proof of merit; and that, even to be convicted of Sedition, and subjected to the severest punishment which our laws can inflict for that offence, is become a sort of passport to fame? Who knows not, that it now demands more of firmness to be the advocate of orthodoxy and loyalty, than it formerly required of audacity to pronounce the apology, not to say the panegyrick, of heterodoxy and of sedition?

If we proceed to form our estimate of the manners and principles of the times, from a view of our religious character, we shall be found, I fear, not less disposed to sacrifice truth at the shrine of liberality. To avoid those dissensions and contests, which are so often fatal to christian charity, it has been the ruling aim of those wise master-builders, who framed our present happy constitution in church and state, to produce and preserve (as far as that is to be effected by human means) an uniformity in our religious creed and professions. In the hope, as it should seem, of counteracting this wise and virtuous purpose, it has been no less the unwearied endeavour of our modern reformers to distract the world with disputes, which can never be determined so as to silence all objections; and which, if they could be so determined, are but little likely either to enlarge our understandings, improve our morals, or multiply our rational enjoyments. Arrogating to themselves the proud title of Philosophers, they represent every man who, after the most diligent and

conscientious enquiry, adopts and abides by *the faith once delivered to the saints*, as a man of a weak and narrow mind, and of a servile temper; an enthusiast or a bigot: or, to sum up every thing that is low and degrading, in one comprehensive term of reproach, as an orthodox member of the established church. It is not that the test-laws (those never-failing topics of reforming declamation) either have trenched, or are likely to trench, upon the rights of private judgement: the mere speculative possibility that they may be thus abused, is an argument of sufficient weight against them, in the judgement of these reformers. And hence, instead of exhorting us to continue to keep our doors shut (as is the case at present) against our declared enemies, they rail at us for not opening them to all comers. Equally liberal in the distribution of blessings, which it is still less their province to distribute, they, in like manner, "open the doors of heaven to men of all professions in the world, who live well, according to the measure of light bestowed on them;" and think it shocking to humanity, that crimes, which are temporal, should be followed by punishments that are eternal.* ("The scope which men give to their imaginations," says one of the acutest of

our

* Thus to confound mercy and justice, even as they respect the Deity, is to confound his attributes:—"Is it not for the honour of the Divine Majesty to exercise justice as well as mercy? Always to pardon and never to punish, would be tameness, rather than benignity; a renunciation of holiness, rather than a display of goodness.—Or can it be right in us so extravagantly to magnify the *amiable*, as to depreciate, nay, even to annihilate, the *awful* attributes of the Deity? This, says a poet, (Dr. Young, Night Thoughts, No. IV,) is the theology, not of Christians but of infidels:—

Who

our divines, " when they leave their only sure guide, the word of God, is always dangerous, and often fatal." He who reflects, as he ought, on the obsequiousness and pliability of human reason, and the facility with which men deceive themselves, when the interest of their passions requires that they should be deceived, will not be surprized to find, while this sentiment prevails, every man adopting that creed which best suits his own inclination, and seems most likely to justify his own practice.

" From this affectation of candour," says an elegant writer, " we have sunk into listlessness; and have tamely suffered a daring spirit of infidelity to oppose, and a specious heresy to undermine, the interests of christianity; and only because we have been apprehensive that our firmness would be branded with the odious name of bigotry."

No longer assailing the strong holds of religion by open and direct attacks, like the Tolands and Tindals of former times, modern infidels, under the more specious name of philosophers, have kept up a seemingly less furious, but certainly not less dangerous, war against her, under the direction, sometimes of ridicule, and always of sophistry; whilst their useful ally, the wily Socinian, has sought to

' Who set at odds heav'n's jarring attributes,

' And with one excellence another wound;

' Maim heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams;

' Bid mercy triumph over God himself,

' Undeified by their opprobrious praise:

' A God all mercy is a God unjust.

THERON AND ASPASIA: Dialogue IV.

sap her foundations, by the treacherous arts of false interpretation. Just so, in France, long before the actual breaking out of that dreadful spirit of revolt,---of which all that even the most discerning dare venture to prognosticate with certainty, is, a perpetuation of the dreadful consequences which it has already produced ; enmity to the tranquillity of Europe, and unceasing endeavours to annihilate christianity,---a numerous train of self-sufficient philosophers deluged their country with pestilent writings on the subject of religion. And yet, undismayed by their fate, even here, though the country be at length awakened to a due sense of its danger, many insidious publications, of various complexions and characters, but all of them, either directly or indirectly, hostile to revealed truth, are still industriously circulated, and still find numerous patrons.

The same inconsiderate spirit of universal toleration, and unrestrained indulgence, of novel and untried theories, appears also to have possessed a large portion of the public mind on questions that relate to our civil interests. Ungrateful for the long course of prosperity and happiness which we have enjoyed, under the shelter of those fences and mounds with which our ancestors saw fit to guard our constitution, the self-commissioned modellers of new schemes of political justice exert all their energies, with unceasing and unwearied ardour, to dismantle those fastnesses, and to level all our strong holds with the ground. All this, and much more of the same temperament, they easily palm upon the unwary and credulous, under the imposing pretext, that they are actuated solely by the great
interest

interest which they take in the welfare of the people. What their effect has been we now too plainly see, in that rebellion of unexampled folly and guilt, which, though at length happily and effectually checked, can hardly yet be said to be wholly suppressed, in our sister kingdom.

Still, mercy, and every modification of mercy, is so amiable and godlike a quality, that it is not without some difficulty a man can bring himself to yield to the conviction of its doing harm, even in its most palpable misapplications. I wish (and who does not wish?) to be indulgent even to its excesses. But, when it is considered, that the natural tendency of this, the most endearing of all the affections, is to run into an undistinguishing extreme; to despise the temperate wisdom and sober counsels of the head, and to trust solely to the hasty suggestions of the heart, it is to become *a partaker of other men's sins*, not to point out the danger of such delusion.

And this danger is the greater, because as it flows from a source whence it is least expected to proceed, it both eludes foresight and defies prevention. For, as our bodily frames are subject to diseases, which bring the certainty of death before they inspire the apprehension of danger, so that those who are afflicted with them are never less in health, than when they appear to be most so; so the body politick may, in like manner, be exposed to danger, if not by its real prosperity, yet by a false security; and thus its ruin be achieved by those very qualities which seem to constitute virtues.

Such

Such were those latent evils, which, without being either seen or apprehended, till the mischief was done and past a remedy, have so often undermined and brought to the ground establishments, which otherwise might have seemed to bid defiance to time itself; just as blights and cankers (of which the most intelligent naturalists have never yet been able to discover either the cause or the cure) mar all the fair promises of the vegetable world. The state of every highly polished and luxurious country, thus gradually consumed by inward maladies, which prey upon its vitals, (whilst, like a person in an hectic fever, it still wears the blush of health,) has been aptly and elegantly compared to the unexpected eruption of Vesuvius. "Whilst the inhabitants are sunk in voluptuousness; whilst all is smiling around them, and they think that no evil, no danger, is nigh, the seeds of destruction are fermenting within; and, breaking out on a sudden, lay waste all their opulence, all their delights, till they are left a sad monument of divine wrath, and of the fatal effects of internal corruption."

We might, however, with just as much reason, infer the non-existence of real worth, from the number of hypocrites which infest society, as imagine, that, because the merit of true candour and unquestionable benevolence are so frequently claimed by those who certainly do not possess them, therefore they have no real existence; or that, because they are so often abused, and even pressed into the service of vice, they are not still virtues of infinite use and inestimable value. Nor are the lines which separate legitimate mercy from

from this its counterfeit, modern philanthropy, so indistinct and so faintly marked, as not to be easily descried by any person who is at all in earnest in the examination, and solicitous to make the discovery. And to endeavour to ascertain them with all possible exactness, both in principle and in practice, marks at once our sense of duty and our wisdom. For if justice without mercy be deemed (and truly deemed) rigour, the converse of the proposition is equally true, viz. That mercy without justice, or, in other words, mercy without judgement or discrimination, is indubitably weakness, and, in effect, guilt. It is the union of mercy and justice which forms that point of the utmost perfection attainable by any institutions that are merely human. And, conscious as I am of being supported by the general suffrage of my countrymen, as well as by that of the world at large, I do, without vanity, (though certainly not without the most heart-felt satisfaction) presume to boast, that if these virtues of justice and mercy (the union of which I can hardly help regarding as something almost more than human) ever were, or, in this imperfect state, ever can be, closely and intimately united, they will be found and felt to be so in that admired system of equal laws by which these realms are governed, (and under that constitution which, blessed be God, is still the possession and the pride of Britons.

This constitution our forefathers thought well worth the purchase, even when they paid for it with their fortunes and their lives. Let not then their posterity undervalue what *they* so highly prized, nor be less animated to defend what they were so resolute to

acquire. More especially now, in this awful crisis of our fate, when our enemies live and are mighty, and they that hate us wrongfully are many in number, does it behove us, each in our respective station, to be prepared, with undegenerate and undiminished zeal, to speak or to act in its support; resolving, if need be, even to die for the preservation of this precious bequest of our ancestors, that we may be able to transmit it, unimpaired, to our descendants. Much, indeed, does it import us to watch with holy vigilance, and to protect with unremitting resolution, this sacred deposit of our liberties, our laws, and our religion; which, like the ark of the chosen people of God, contains all that is most dear to us--the pledge of national prosperity, and the earnest of divine assistance.

What, though we have been both long and loudly threatened by a foe of unexampled malignity, who has already anticipated our fall, exclaiming, as Tyre did of Sidon, *Aba! we shall be replenished, now she is laid waste*: yet, if we do but remain true to ourselves, we may bid him defiance. From open and avowed enemies, however desperate, we have nothing to fear; should our country and our constitution ever fall, (which Heaven, in its mercy, forbid!) they will not perish by foreign hands: they can not be utterly undone---but by the general prevalency of those *dangerous doctrines and positions*, which, like blasting and mildew, poison and kill every thing they touch: this is the *pestilence that walketh in darkness, and this the destruction that wasteth at noon-day*.

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And it is not one or two governments only that have been swept away by this desolating inundation: Nations, great in extent of territory, and mighty in resources, preferring, as it appears, a slow and lingering death, to one that is instantaneous, have sought a respite from the horrors of protracted warfare, by acceding to an ignominious and ruinous peace. Whilst, then, other powers have, in quick succession, either been swallowed up, or nearly overwhelmed in the revolutionary vortex, we still remain a free and independent people; and standing in the gap, single and unsupported, seem, in the dignified tone of consistent magnanimity, authorized by Heaven to say to the destroying angel, *Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther--- here shall thy proud hosts be stayed.*

Involved and gloomy as the clouds, which envelope our horizon, still are, some brighter rays of hope, and some prospects of returning comfort, begin to dawn upon us. Awakened, at length, to a sense of our sins, by the calamities which, in so dreadful a war, it has not been possible wholly to avert, we are become, or, as I trust, are in a fair way of soon becoming, a regenerated people, no longer *reprobate to every good work*. As in no former period were we ever surrounded with equal danger, so never before, I believe, notwithstanding the fierceness of party-spirit, diminished but not destroyed, were people of all ranks and conditions so cordially unanimous as they now are.

And

And it is to this spirit, this vigour, and this unanimity, that, under God, we owe our present safety.---Seeing, then, that we know these things before, we shall not again be easily led away by the error of the wicked, nor fall from our own steadfastness.



Involved and gloomy as the clouds, which envelope our horizon, still are some brighter rays of hope, and some prospects of returning comfort, begin to dawn upon us. Awakened, at length, to a sense of our sins, by the calamities which, in so dreadful a way, it has not been possible wholly to avert, we are become, or, as I trust, are in a fair way of soon becoming, a regenerated people, no longer regardless to every good work. As in no former period were we ever surrounded with equal danger, so never before, I believe, notwithstanding the fierceness of party-spirit, diminished but not destroyed, were people of all ranks and conditions so cordially unanimous as they now are.